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ABSTRACT

Based on the idea that there are universal beliefs that unite people from every part of the world, this collection illustrates common sayings, stories, proverbs, and quotations from students in English-as-a-Second-Language classrooms. During the classes, students talk about their families, countries, and customs, including traditional foods and recipes. The collection presented in this document evolved from a class project in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Students came from Taiwan, Haiti, Iran, Mexico, Morocco, Puerto Rico, Spain, and Vietnam. The sayings are presented in each native language. Contains 14 references. (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education) (LB)

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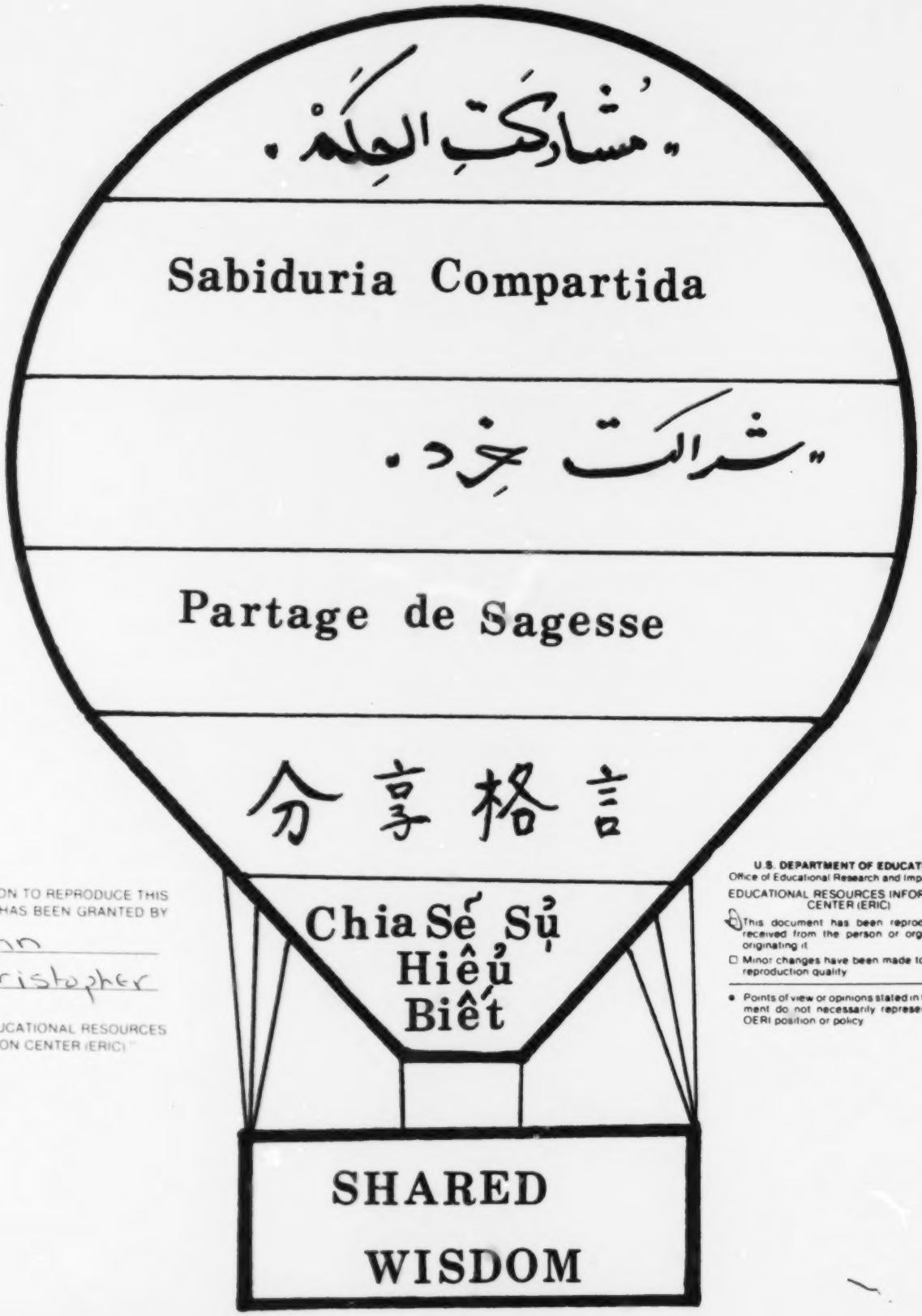

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S H A R E D W I S D O M

A Collection of
Proverbs, Sayings and Quotations

Adult ESL Class - West Chester, Pennsylvania
Spring 1991

Funding for this project was received in whole through the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

FOREWORD

There are universal beliefs that unite people from every part of the world. Common sayings, stories, proverbs and quotations are passed on through the generations and become part of the beliefs and values of each culture. The power of the ideas spans the centuries, sometimes becoming stronger over time.

Students from several countries with very different backgrounds and life experiences have studied English in our ESL classes in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Coming from four continents, they represent the new immigrant population in the United States.

During class discussions the students talk about their families, countries, and customs. Occasionally they share traditional foods and recipes. This international exchange has expanded our curriculum -- even the ESL beginner can participate in discussions of food. A favorite question is, "What did you prepare for dinner?"

Recently the class has shared sayings and proverbs from their countries, some of which were easy to translate into several languages. in other cases the thought would be expressed with different nouns, i.e. "It's raining cats and dogs." In Spanish this is translated into English, "It's raining into the water jugs," and in French, "It's raining brown." Sometimes they were expressing the same principle in different settings.

One day three of the men from Mexico asked if they could sing "Las Mañanitas" to a young woman from Morocco who was celebrating a birthday. It's a tradition in Latin America to waken the birthday person at sunrise with this song, accompanied sometimes by guitar. A week later they surprised a Vietnamese woman with the same song. In Viet Nam all birthdays are celebrated at the New Year, which date changes each year with the Chinese calendar.

We learned that all of our cultures teach language to babies and toddlers through little rhymes or tunes. We compared our different versions of singing the alphabet, learning how to count, a song about the weather or a lullaby to sleep. Certain fairy tales and parables are universal, using different characters and settings appropriate to each country.

This project encouraged the class to improve their communication skills. As they spoke about their childhood and recalled specific ideas, they were building vocabulary and increasing their knowledge of grammar. Perhaps as important has been the growth of friendship and trust while working together.

An excerpt from Walt Whitman's <u>Leaves of Grass</u> sums up what we are trying to express:

"These are really the thoughts of all men in all ages and lands,
they are not original with me,

If they are not yours as much as mine they are nothing,
or next to nothing,

If they are not the riddle and the untying of the riddle
they are nothing,

If they are not just as close as they are distant
they are nothing.

This is the grass that grows wherever the land is
and the water is,

This is the common air that bathes the globe."

We extend our appreciation to La Comunidad Hispana, our sponsoring agency, which is part of the Chester County Adult Literacy Consortium administered by the Chester County Intermediate Unit. Special thanks go to St. Agnes Church where the classes meet, and to each of the students listed below by country and language. Thanks also to several friends of the class who checked the translations.

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BELIEVING

Seeing is believing.

Believe nothing of what you hear, only half of what you see.

* * * * * *

He can who believes he can.

All things are possible to him that believeth.
- Mark (The Bible 9:23)

(S) Todo es posible para el que cree.

* * * * * *

If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed . . . nothing shall be impossible unto you.
Matthew (The Bible 17:20)

(S) Si tuvieran fe, aunque sólo fuera del tamaño de una semilla de mostaza . . . nada les sería imposible.

* * * * * *

It's unbelievable but true.

(F) Incroyable mais vrai.

(S) Es increible pero cierto.

(V) Đó là điều không thể tưởng tượng được nhưng lại là sự thật.

(A) إنما تقبلة لا تصدق .

(P) « باور نکردنیست اما حقیقت است »

* * * * * *

Believe nothing, O monk, merely because you have been told it . . . But believe what, after due examination and analysis, you find conducive to the . . . welfare of all beings.
- Gautama Buddha (from Sermon of the Wheel of the Law, 6th century B.C.)

FAMILY

One father is more than a hundred schoolmasters.
- George Herbert (1593-1633)

The mother's heart is the child's schoolroom.
- Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887)

An ounce of mother is worth a ton of priest.
- Spanish proverb

* * * * * *

Mothers are the first school.

(A) الأم هيا المدرسة الأولى.

* * * * * *

Daughter today, mother tomorrow. Son today, father tommorrow.

(S) Hija eres, madre será. Hijo eres, padre será.

* * * * * *

We didn't inherit the land from our fathers. We are borrowing it for our children.
- Amish belief

It takes a hundred men to build an encampment, but it takes one woman to build a home.
- Chinese proverb

When I was a boy of 14 my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21 I was astonished at how much he had learnt in 7 years.
- Mark Twain (1835-1910)

Bring up a child in the way he should go.

God could not be everywhere, and therefore he made mothers.
- Jewish and Swedish proverb

All that I am, or hope to be, I ove to my mother.
- Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)

A daughter is a daughter all of her life, but a son is a son 'til he gets him a wife.

* * * * * *

Blood is thicker than water.

(V) Máu chảy ruột mền.

(C) 血濃於水.

FRIENDSHIP

Friends are like roses. They give pleasure just by being.

Friends: They are kind to each other's hopes.
They cherish each other's dreams.
- Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

Happy the heart that comforts a friend.

When friends meet, hearts warm.
- Amish saying

Make more friends. Almost anyone will make a better friend than enemy.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

The only way to have a friend is to be one.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Life has no blessing like a prudent friend.
- Euripides (480-406 B.C.)

Friendship is always a sweet responsibility, never an opportunity.
- Kahlil Gibran

* * * * * *

The globe is round. We shall meet again.
- Vietnamese saying

(V) Trái dất tròn, có ngày chúng ta sẽ gặp lại.
(C) 地球是圓的.我們將會再見面.

* * * * * *

Be slow to fall into friendship; but when thou art in, continue firm and constant.
- Socrates (469-399 B.C.)

Friendship is a plant of slow growth, and must undergo and withstand the shocks of adversity before it is entitled to the appellation.
- George Washington (1732-1799)

Friendship is the only cement that will ever hold the world together.
- Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924)

* * * * * *

Make new friends but keep the old. One is silver and the other gold.

(F) L'amitié est une ligne d'or.

One cannot serve both God and man at the same time.

It appears to be a law that you cannot have a deep sympathy with both man and nature.

- Henry David Thoreau, Walden (1817-1862)

A thing of beauty is a joy forever.

- John Keats (1795-1821)

Whence is it that nature does nothing in vain; and whence arises all that order and beauty which we see in the world?

- Sir Isaac Newton, Opticks (1642-1727)

Nature abhors a vacuum. (from Latin proverb: natura vacuum abhorret)

- Francois Rabelais (1494-1533)

And nature must obey necessity.

- William Shakespeare, Julius Caesar (1564-1616)

If all the trees on earth were pens, and if there were seven oceans full of ink, they would not suffice to describe the wonders of the Almighty.

- Mohammed (c. 570-632)

The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

When one leaf trembles, the whole bough moves.

A tree is a nobler object than a prince in his coronation robes.

- Alexander Pope (1688-1774)

There is nothing in the whole world which is permanent. Everything flows onward; all things are brought into being with a changing nature; the ages themselves glide by in constant movement.

- Ovid (43 B.C.-17 A.D.)

* * * * * *

Birds of a feather flock together.

(S) Dime con quien andas, y te diré quien eres.

It's raining cats and dogs.

(F) Il fait brun.

(S) Está lloviendo a cántaros.

KINDNESS/SHARING

We share joys and sorrows.

(V) Chúng ta chia bùi sẻ ngọt.

* * * * * *

If you want something good for yourself, you must want it for others.

(A) حب لأخيك ما تحب لنفسك.

(P) «بردیگران بخواه هرآنچه برخود خواهی»

* * * * * *

He gives twice who gives without delay.

(V) Cho sớm thì quý gấp đôi.

* * * * * *

The Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Do to every man as thou wouldst have him do to thee; and do not unto another what thou wouldst not have him do to thee.

c. 500 B.C.

(C) 待人如待己.

(F) Ne faites pas a autrui ce que vous ne voulez pas qu'on vous fasses.

(S) No hagan a los demás lo que no quieres que te hagan a ti.

(V) Lời vàng son: bạn sẽ có người khác giúp đỡ như bạn đã giúp đỡ người khác.

(A) لا تعمل شيئا قبيحا بإنسان ما لا تحبه لنفسك.

(P) با دیگران طوری رفتار بکن که دوست داری دیگران با تو رفتار کنند.

* * * * * *

One good turn deserves another.

(F) Qui fait plaisir, cueille le plaisir.

(S) Una buena acción merece otra.

(V) Cha me ăn ở có đức thì con cháu hưởng.

(A) إذا عملت خيرا تلقى خيرا. وإذا عملت شرا تلقى شرا.

(P) هر کار خوبی سزاوار پاداشی است.

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It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

* * * * * *

<u>You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours.</u>

(V) Ban giúp tôi, tôi giúp ban.

* * * * * *

The wise man becomes full of good, even if he gathers it little by little.
- Buddha (Gautama Siddhartha) 6th Century B.C.

We are all of us fellow-passengers on the same planet and we are all of us equally responsible for the happiness and the well-being of the world in which we happen to live.
- Hendrik Willem van Loon (1882-1944)

If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything.

* * * * * *

<u>The best of charity is that which the right hand gives and the left hand does not know it.</u>
- from the Koran

(A) خير صدقة تدطيها باليد اليمنى و لا تنتظر مثيلها من اليد اليسرى.

(P) بهترین صدقه دادن آنست که انتظار پاداشش را نداشته باشی.

* * * * * *

LEARNING/KNOWLEDGE

It is not enough to have a good mind. The main thing is to use it well.

- Rene Descartes (1596-1650)

The more you know, the more you know you don't know.

We don't know a millionth of one percent about anything.

- Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931)

To be what we are, and to become what we are capble of becoming, is the only end of life.

- Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

Once you learn something it is hard to unlearn.

- Greek

Never too late to learn.

- Scottish

No one is too old to learn.

- German

* * * * * *

Even if we study to old age we shall not finish learning.

- Chinese

(C) 活到老,學到老.

Learning is like roving upstream; not to advance is to drop back.

- Chinese

(C) 學如逆水行舟. 不進則退.

* * * * * *

One learns by failing.

(F) On apprend par ses erreurs.

* * * * * *

Learning is better than goods.

(A) العلم خير من المال :

* * * *

Doubt is the key of knowledge.

(P) شک وتردید کلید دانش است .

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He that travels far, knows much.

(V) Đi một ngày đàng, học một sàng khôn.

* * * * * *

That is true which all men say.

(V) Nhiều người nói tất nhiên phải dúng.

* * * * * *

Confess you were wrong yesterday, it will show you are wise today.

(P) اقرار کن که دیروز خطا کردی. این نشان میدهد که امروز عاقل شده‌ای.

* * * * * *

Two heads are better than one.

(S) Dos cabezas piensan más que una.

(C) 二個臭皮匠，抵過一個諸葛亮. * * *

All that glitters is not gold.

(F) Tout ce qui brille n'est pas or.

* * * * * *

Without knowing the force of words, it is impossible to know men.
- Confucius, Analects (551-479 B.C)

* * * * * *

When you are crossing the desert, plant trees, for you may be coming back the same way in your old age when you will be glad of the shade.
- Persian Proverb

(P) وقتی که از صحرا عبور میکنی درختان بکار. شاید همین راه را برگشتی در زمان پیری باشد که آنوقت از بودن زیر سایه آنها لذت ببری.

* * * * *

OPPORTUNITY/WORK/SUCCESS

If at first you don't succeed, try and try again.

One must learn by doing the thing; though you think you know it, you have no certainty until you try.
- Sophocles (495-406 B.C.)

Self-trust is the first secret of success.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Rome wasn't built in a day.

* * * * * *

The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.
- Lao-tse (6th century, B.C.)

(C) 千里迢迢始於第一步.

* * * * * *

Many roads lead to Rome.

(F) Tout chemins mênent à Rome.

(S) Hay muchas formas de llegar a Roma.

(V) Dường nào cũng về Lama.

(A) إن أغلب الطرق توصل إلى روما.

(P) برای رسیدن به اهداف در زندگی از هزاران راه میتوان استفاده نمود.

* * * * * *

When one door closes, another one opens.

(F) Si une porte est fermée, d'autre portes sont ouvertes.

(S) Cuando una puerta se te cierra, otra se te abre.

(V) Khi một cánh cửa đóng thì cánh khác lại mở.

(A) إذا كانت باب واحدة مغلقة فالأبواب الأخرى مفتوحة

(P) "خداوند گر ببندد دری ز رحمت کشاید درهای دیگر"

* * * * * *

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A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

(S) Más vale pájaro en mano que cien volando.

* * * * * *

We must believe in luck. For how else can we explain the success of those we don't like.

- Jean Cocteau (1889-1963)

Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there.

- Will Rogers (1879-1935)

* * * * * *

Drive thy business, let not thy business drive thee.

(P) "برخیز و تو از پیش بر کارت تا" مگذار که از پیش برد کارت

* * * * * *

Don't count your chickens before they hatch.

(F) Ne vendez pas la peau de l'ours avant de l'attraper.

(S) No cuentes con lo que no tienes.

(V) Đừng tin chắc vào những quả trứng gà trước khi chúng nở.

(A) لا تحسب البيلم دجاجا قبل خروجهم .

(P) جوجه ها را در پائیز نمی شمارند .

* * * * * *

If Allah gives you prosperity, he will give you the brains to go with it.

- Turkish proverb

(A) إذا أعطاك الله عقلا فيجب عليك أن تفكر به .

(P) خداوند به انسان عقل داده تا از شانسهایی که در زندگی به دست میآورد استفاده نماید.

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LIFE/TIME

Look to this day! For it is life, the very life of life.
For yesterday is already a dream, and tomorrow is only a vision;
but today, well lived, makes every yesterday a dream of happiness,
and every tomorrow a vision of hope.
- from the Sanskrit (Hindu)

Nobody promised you a rose garden.

Only time will tell.

Where there's life there's hope.

* * * * * *

Life is like an onion which one peels crying.
- French proverb

(F) La vie comme l'onion un jour vous fait pleurer.

* * * * * *

It's a great life if you don't weaken.

The years teach us much the days never knev.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

The art of living is more like wrestling than dancing.
- Marcus Aurelius (121-181)

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.

You have to take the bitter with the sweet.

* * * * * *

Do as the bee does with the rose, take the honey and leave the thorn.

(A) من أراد العسل يصبر إلى "قرص" النحل .

(P) "عیاشی چو زنبور کن بر گل چو رسد گیرد عسلش و نخد خارش نرسد"
"استاد حالت"

* * * * * *

LIFE/TIME

Life is a struggle.

(F) Vivre c'est lutter.

(S) La vida es una lucha.

(V) Đời sống là một cuộc hành trình.

(A) الوقت كالسيف إن لم تقطعه قطعك.

(P) زندگی سراسر نبرد است.

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PEACE

Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding.

- Albert Einstein, Notes on Pacificism (1879-1955)

There never was a good war or a bad peace.

- Benjamin Franklin (letter to Quincy, 1783)

Nothing can bring you peace but yourself.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Tranquility is nothing else than the good ordering of the mind.

- Marcus Aurelius

COUNTRY/HOME

Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.

A house is made of brick and stone. A home is made of love alone.

Travel East and travel West, a man's home is still the best.

Home is where you hang your hat.

Home is where the heart is.

Every bird likes his own nest.

Happy is the house that shelters a friend.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

To travel is to discover that everyone is wrong about other countries.

- Aldous Huxley (1894-1964)

* * * * * *

Where liberty is, there is my country.

- Latin proverb

(V) Đâu có tự do, đó là tổ quốc tôi.

* * * * * *

QUOTES FROM THE RUBAIYAT

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and -
sans End!

- Omar Khayyam, Rubaiyat
(d. 1123)

(F) Bois du vin, sous la terre, un jour, tu dormiras.
Sans aucun compagnon, sans femme dans tes bras,
A personne ne dis ce secret formidable;
Coquelicot fane ne refleurira pas.

(A) لَا تَدَعِ الْيَوْمَ يَغُرُّكَ وَلَا
يَضِيعُ بِكَ الْعَيْشُ وَاطْرَحْ هَمَّكَ
وَعَلَيْكَ بِالْأَرْضِ وَالْبَيَاةِ وَاجْتَنِبْ
مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَغُصَّ الثَّرَى حَاجَتَكَ :

(P) مگذار که غصه در کنارت گیرد
وان ده محال روزگارت گیرد
مگذار کتاب و بط و آب و لب کشت
زان پیش که خاک در حصارت گیرد

* * * * * *

. . . . Think then you are TODAY what
YESTERDAY YOU were - TOMORROW you shall not
be less.

- Khayyam, Rubaiyat

(F) Tout devant aboutir au neant dans ce monde,
Dis-toi que tu n'es plus; puisque tu vis,
- sois gai.

(A) إِنْ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْوُجُودِ فَنَا الْفَتَى
فَاقْضِ فَنَاكَ وَعِشْ سَعِيدًا بَاقِيًا :

(P) پایان همه عمر جهان نیستی
پندار که نیستی چو هستی خوش باش

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